



# Into the Glacier

A Game of Solitary Exploration

# Welcome to the Glacier.

It is a mysterious place just out of humanity's grasp, just a little bit further than people, with their lights and their fire, can reach.

That is not, of course, to say it is uninhabited. Nor is it to say that no one ever ventures into the Glacier. People have their reasons.

You have your reasons.

Whatever their reason for trespassing in Winter's sacred territory, people try and quickly find that they do not belong here.

## You Will Need:

- ❑ One standard deck of playing cards
- ❑ Two six-sided dice
- ❑ A character marker like a figurine or small toy
- ❑ A piece of paper and a pencil

## You Might Want:

- ❑ A hot drink
- ❑ A favorite blanket
- ❑ A nice journal

## Content Warnings:

Sickness - The Rimerein Unicorn  
Death - The Ice Dragon's Feather  
Death - 4 of Spades

# Why Are You Here?

You have come to the Glacier because you have heard a story. You have every reason to believe it is true, and you have come to the Glacier to find something. Which story are you following, exactly?

# The Rimerein Unicorn

You heard the tale of the Rimerein Unicorn from your grandmother when you were small, and again from your mother when you were a little bit older. It seems like the kind of story every household has its own version of, and just thinking about the Rimerein Unicorn reminds you of a warm kitchen and the scent of baking.

Once upon a time, there was a little child very much like yourself, though you are no longer a child. One horrible winter, the child's parents fell very ill. They could not eat, they burned with raging fever, and they were bound to their bed, racked with pain. The little child did their best to help, but being too small to chop wood, too little to cook, and too young to work, there was only so much they could do while their parents suffered and the other, smaller children grew more and more afraid.

The little child was confused and frightened, too, of course. Anyone would be! But they tried to be very brave and very strong for the smaller children.

And then one of the smaller children one morning did not wake, but kept on sleeping, face red and forehead burning.

So, the oldest child set out into the cold to look for help. They intended to find the doctor, but a cruel blizzard lashed at them and painted the air so milky white that the child went the wrong way – further away from the doctor, toward the Glacier. In the milky white air, they had no idea that every step took them further and further from the fireplaces and blankets and torches of the village.

The wind blew right through the child, and that white snow blew right into their eyelashes and stung their forehead. They focused on taking just one step at a time, just one more step.

And then, in the middle of the glacier, where the blizzard was at its absolute thickest and the air stung to breathe, the child bumped into someone. Thinking it was the doctor, the child just hurriedly said everything they could think of to say. "Please help!" "My parents and little sibling are sick!" "They have a fever!" "I don't know what to do!" "I'm scared!" It all came out in a rush.

And then the blizzard subsided for a moment, and the child looked up to see what looked like a small, delicate gray horse. Trails of lacy ice crystals wound through its mane and tail, and a horn of purest blue poked out of its forehead.

It said nothing, of course.

But it knelt in the snow, and looked at the child as if inviting them to climb into its back.

When the child was safely astride the Unicorn, with little hands tangled in its icy mane, the Unicorn began to run. Not just one step at a time through the clear night air, but at a mighty gallop, covering ground which had felt like hours to the child in a matter of seconds. Soon, they approached the lights of the village, and the child's house.

The Rimerein Unicorn walked into the house as if it belonged there, ducking its head beneath the doorway. And when it touched its horn to the sleeping family members, a pale blue snow began falling indoors, surrounding them with a faint light.

When the light subsided, the Unicorn had vanished. And so, to the child's delight, had the fever. Their parents sat up in bed, free from pain, and their little sibling jumped up and danced.

And if this story is true, you need the Unicorn's help. So you set out into the Glacier to seek it out.

# The Winter Queen's Service

You heard the tale of the Winter Queen's Service from a certain socialite of your acquaintance. They are lovely beyond description, at least as far as you are concerned, with a laugh like a festival and a smile like a perfect petit four. One day, gathered around with what felt like an impossible number of other admirers, at a cheerful salon, they laughed and told this story.

You see, once upon a time, the Queen of Winter, when she was but newly coronated and young, decided that she had a great deal to learn about the world beyond her own world and her retinue. So, in disguise, she wandered out of the Glacier to see what she could find in the village nearby. She had to be very crafty in order to do this, as her many advisors were dead set against it. They were royal advisors, too, which makes them crafty opponents and very difficult to outsmart. However, she said to herself, she was the Queen of Winter, and there would be no outsmarting her.

So, several little fibs, daring escapes, and feats of cleverness later, she found herself wandering the streets of the village, unadvised.

She saw people doing their chores, which she watched from behind a fence with her ice-blue eyes, fascinated. Her eyes were about to turn an envious green, when suddenly she saw a particular villager.

They were special. The Queen watched them as they walked around the village gathering ingredients for something in a simple burlap tote. They smiled at all the shopkeepers, waving mittened hands and shouting cheerful greetings as their breath puffed up in a fog around them, and just the sight of their joy and their hard work made the Queen feel a little like she was melting.

Soon, the melting sensation grew almost

unbearable, and the Queen couldn't keep to herself any longer. She poked her head out over the top of the fence, trying to get a better look at this special villager, when their eyes met.

The Queen, having no crafty plan for this eventuality, stammered her way through an introduction, and the villager, with the same easy cheer they had with everyone else, introduced themselves in turn.

Soon, the two of them sat for tea in a nearby cafe, and they talked and talked for over an hour, sharing a pot of tea in a simple rustic tea service.

The Queen invited the villager to join her for tea in the Glacier. They picked a date, and the Queen hurried back home to prepare.

When the day of the tea date arrived, the Queen waited anxiously in a clearing, with tea set out in a sparkling set of snow-white china decorated in ice blue flowers.

Suddenly, she realized something that made her jump up from her seat and run out into the Glacier – the villager didn't belong there, and could freeze! So, she abandoned the tea service in the clearing and ran off in search of her special villager, who she found at the edge of the woods, shivering.

Despite what her advisors said, she took them back to her icy palace to take care of them. Some versions of the story say they were married!

But all versions of the story say this – that anyone who can find the romantic tea setting she left abandoned in the clearing will surely be able to find and rescue their beloved from anything that befalls them.

And if this story is true, this might be your chance to find the key to that special person's heart. So you set out into the Glacier to seek it out.

# The Mountain Knight

You heard the tale of the Mountain Knight from an esteemed researcher in your field, someone everyone looks up to, yourself included. It was first mentioned in passing in one of their papers, but they brought it up again over a professional lunch.

You see, right now people come in mostly the same size. There are minor differences, surely – a matter of a foot here or some inches there, but by and large people have a very narrow range of sizes. But a long time ago, people came in many many different sizes than they do now. People were very small, only the size of a cat or smaller, and people were enormous. How enormous? The size of the Mountain Knight.

A long time ago, in this mysterious age, people were philosophers and poets and scientists, and they studied the sky and every other place they could find omens and signs. The Mountain Knight, a person the size of, well, a mountain, was just such a philosopher. They used their closeness to the sky to study the movement of the stars, and were well-regarded not only as a knight of great courage and valor, but also as an astronomer and poet.

One day, the Mountain Knight was sitting on the hillside, watching the sky and composing some verses to share with their friends when next they met, when the connections between the words in their poem and the stars in the sky suddenly became clear to them in a moment of sublime inspiration. Such inspiration, and no one to share it with!

They stood to hurry to the city and tell their friends about their latest work, but the inspiration kept going. Like a stone thrown across an icy pond, the thoughts of the Mountain Knight just kept going, unable

to stop until they reached the other side.

They waited until nightfall so they could observe the stars and make sure they were completely certain.

But once the stars were out, there was no avoiding it – the Mountain Knight saw catastrophe in the movements of the spheres as they sat in the snowy hillside. A great meteor glowed in the distance, threatening to crash into the planet and cause unimaginable pain and suffering. Maybe not to the people of that age, but to people of some far-flung future age this meteor might even spell complete doom!

Despondent, the Mountain Knight sat on the hillside, trying to think of something they could do to protect the people of that future, people who they had never met. They thought and they thought and they still couldn't come up with anything.

"Fine!" the Mountain Knight said out into the lonely night, gripping their enormous hill-cleaving sword, "Fine! Come then, meteor! I will be waiting right here when you do!"

And it is said that the Mountain Knight waited on that hill so long that they turned to stone and became just a mountain. But, it is said, they are still watching the place where the meteor will fall.

This might just be the era threatened by that meteor, according to the legends. Whether or not the Mountain Knight can be roused may make the difference between peace and devastation for our world. Even if they cannot be roused, perhaps their stone gaze will provide a clue to what we can do to avoid disaster. So you set out into the Glacier to seek them out.



# Ice Dragon's Feather

You heard about the Ice Dragon's Feather over drinks with a notorious braggart. You and a small crowd of other drinkers listened patiently as the braggart told their tale of an encounter with the terrifying dragon that dwells in the glacier. Finally, at the climax of the story, they presented what looked like, well, like an ordinary seagull pinion.

It is said that once, in a distant history, there was a warrior without equal. They swore themselves in the service of an infant Prince, and pledged never to allow any force of any kind to interfere with the Prince or his future reign. As the Prince grew into a serious, studious little boy, the warrior was always right there, watching over him. When rebels attempted to kidnap the Prince, the warrior dispatched them in a fierce battle, fighting off almost a dozen people all alone. When a horrifying monster appeared at the southern border, devouring villagers and livestock, the warrior made the journey to dispatch it and brought one of its fangs back to show the Prince.

And when the Ice Dragon left the Glacier to try and snatch summer away from the people of the valley, the warrior was there to drive it away. After the battle, the dragon left in such a hurry that it left one of its shining silver-blue feathers behind. Ever afterward, the Prince wore a dragon feather in his cap.

Then, one day, the old Queen fell ill of a plague, leaving her young son to be crowned King. Everyone in the country tried their hardest to celebrate despite the gloom that had come over the valley. They hung banners and they watched from their windows as a quiet procession made its way through the town.

When the young King was crowned, he stood

alone in front of the assembled people. His protector, the great warrior, had fallen ill with the very same plague that had claimed his mother. All of a sudden, the boy who had grown up loved and protected by capable, strong people was a lonely King with no one to protect him.

All he could do was try and live and honor their protection. An uncertain teenager grew into a stern, quiet, serious young man with a dragon's feather in his cap.

One day, as the King was walking in the woods with his retainers, a group of bandits emerged, weapons drawn, to try and take the young King hostage. They gathered around him, and although his retainers tried, they were too few in number to drive the bandits away.

Just as the leader of the bandits reached a hand out to try and grab the King, everyone present heard a roar coming from the Glacier. Just then, a thick blizzard kicked up, blocking everyone's view and freezing them to their core. In the wind, the King felt a strong hand, like the hand of his sworn protector, take his own hand and lead him to safety.

After that day, the King never fell sick. He was never injured, no matter what incident befell him, and whenever everything around him was in chaos, he closed his eyes and could feel that strong hand guiding him. It is said that the Feather of the Ice Dragon, which he wore until his dying day, had the power to protect him from any misfortune in the place of his fallen guardian.

And you know someone who you would keep safe at any cost. So you set out into the Glacier to seek it out.



# How to Play

## Getting Ready

- First, take out the Ace of Clubs and King of Hearts and set them aside.
- Depending on what you are seeking, take out another card:
  - If you seek the **Rimerein Unicorn**, take out the Ace of Hearts
  - If you seek the **Winter Queen's Service**, take out the Queen of Diamonds
  - If you seek the **Mountain Knight**, take out the Jack of Clubs
  - If you seek the **Ice Dragon's Feather**, take out the King of Spades
- Draw 9-21 more cards, depending how big an area you want to explore, and put them aside face-down.
- Add the card you chose in Step 2 to the face-down pile, also face-down.
- Add the King of Hearts to the pile face-up, so it is the only face-up card.
- Shuffle the pile
- Lay the cards out in a grid face-down (except the King of Hearts, which you can leave face-up).
- Place the Ace of Clubs on the outside of the grid face-up and place your character marker on it.

So, you should have a grid of face-down cards, the King of Hearts face up somewhere in the grid. The Ace of Clubs should be on the outside of the grid face-up.

## Playing the Game

- You start with 8 Warmth. Mark this down on your paper or in your journal.
- Every round, before you move, lose 1 Warmth.
- Every round, you choose a card next to your marker, turn it face-up if it is face-down. Look up that card and follow the instructions on it. (You might want to write in your journal about what you find there.)
- If you ever reach 0 Warmth, then you lose consciousness and need to be rescued. Move your character marker directly to the King of Hearts.

Your goal is to find the thing you came to the Glacier for, and then return to the Ace of Clubs.

Your goal is also to see what you can see, find what you can find, and explore this untouched and mysterious place.



# Things to find

# Hearts – Mysterious Encounters

## **Ace of Hearts – The Rimerein Unicorn**

You come across a clearing where the wind blows in circles, stirring up a milky blizzard like the one in the story. The air smells cold, but you can definitely feel a presence here, and you can see a sliver of pure, perfect blue shining in the blizzard. If you have 3 or fewer Warmth, the Unicorn will approach you, and you will get a chance to tell it what you need and plead for its help. If you only have one Warmth, the Unicorn will take you back to the Village Gate.

## **2 of Hearts – Flock of Birds**

You walk around an old and weathered tree, and somehow in your human clumsiness startle dozens of little white birds from whatever they were doing before you happened along. In a bustle of wingbeats they all take to the air at once, and the sky is filled with spinning birds singing out to one another in a whirling flock. And then, they are gone.

## **3 of Hearts – Snow Maidens**

At first they appear to be whirling eddies of windblown snow, dancing in the cold. As you grow closer to them, however, you see three distinct shapes, dancing in long white dresses and laughing freely. They share drinks from golden cups, and playfully chase one another around in the snow. One of them notices you – she looks human except for the glow of glacier-blue eyes. Smiling, she waves you over and extends the cup. Roll one of your dice: if the number is 5 or 6, you can leave the party and gain 1 Warmth. If it is not, spend 1 Warmth and roll again.

#### **4 of Hearts – Familiar Apparition**

You look down at your boots to see that yours are not the only footprints in the snow here. The wind carries the sound of a familiar voice calling to you, even as it lashes against your cheeks. With snowflakes in your eyes, you can almost see someone beckoning to you from just up ahead, but whenever you reach them, they are just a little further away. Roll one of your dice: if the number is 1 or 2, lose 1 Warmth.

#### **5 of Hearts – Weeping Fairy**

You come into a clearing and hear a tiny voice, barely audible over the wind. It is, however, unmistakable – someone is crying. You call out, and the crying stops; in your snow-blurred vision, you see a tiny person with pale green wings like those of a cabbage moth. Tears are running down their little face, and once they realize you can see them, they begin to plead with you to stay with them. Gain 1 Warmth as you keep the little one company until their friends find them.

#### **6 of Hearts – Watcher in the Woods**

You see a small frame, hiding behind one of the trees. Unlike you, they are unburdened by winter gear – they wear a flowing white shift dress embroidered with blue flowers. As you approach, they flee behind another tree and peek out again to watch you. You could swear you see a crown on their head as they flee to another hiding spot, but soon enough they are gone and you are alone again.

#### **7 of Hearts – Rimebound Oracle**

As you walk past a tree whose branches are encased in glittering ice, a figure drops down, hanging upside by their knees from a branch like a child at play. They have long bluish-black hair, and each strand is coated in a thin layer of ice so that their entire head

glimmers in the light. They lock eyes with you and giggle, saying they know why you're here and offering to help – for a price. You can spend 2 Warmth to turn over and look at any face-down card. You can do this repeatedly if you like.

### **8 of Hearts – Tiny Runaway**

You see a set of footprints in the snow not far away. As you approach them, you see that they are small, extremely small – a child's footsteps. You hurriedly start following the trail; it must be fresh, since it hasn't filled with snow yet. Soon enough, with your longer adult stride, you find them, a child from the village probably no older than seven, trudging through snowdrifts with their shorter legs and looking around for help. You take them by the hand. Gain 1 Warmth. If you immediately take the child back to the village gate, roll both your dice when you get there instead of just one.

### **9 of Hearts – Hoofprints**

In a clearing only about the size of a single room, surrounded by grass that peeks up out of the snow in a display of defiance, you see a tree whose rough bark is marked by gouges at around your eye level. When you approach closer, you see long strands of ice-blue hair, like horsehair, hanging from the lower branches, and you see tiny hoofprints in the snow. If you are seeking the Rimerein Unicorn, gain 2 Warmth. Otherwise, gain 1.

### **10 of Hearts – Prism Spirit**

The sun breaks through the clouds for just an instant, a brief moment of warmth and clarity in the impenetrable winter of the Glacier. You look up, and the world is glittering with fresh light. As the sunlight passes through a nearby icicle, it streams out in a ribbon of rainbow color that winds its way toward you like a snake. A snake with the face of a human being and eyes



that shine in every color. It winds gently around you and whispers its greetings. Move to any face-up card on the board without spending any Warmth.

### **J of Hearts – Friendly Creatures**

The wind dies down a little bit, letting its howling fade into the distance as the snow stops blowing at you and starts falling in delicate little trails. You find a boulder to sit on, and take advantage of the moment to rest. As you do, a little furry face appears from out of the snow, and then another, and then another. Soon, almost a half dozen little white foxes are watching you, approaching cautiously. When you do not get up at their approach, they return to their business, playing around in the snow while you watch and take a much-needed break. Gain 1 Warmth.

### **Q of Hearts – Friendly Hermit**

Ahead of you in the snow, trudging through the blizzard the same as you are, there is a dark shape. Not a foreboding one, but just a regular person like yourself, bundled up in countless layers of coarse cloth and carrying a bundle on their back. You notice each other, and the stranger waves at you, an elderly person with a broad, gentle smile. They invite you back to their home with them – if you like, you can proceed directly to the K of Hearts from here.

### **K of Hearts – The Hermit's Home**

You wake up in a small, cozy cottage in the woods. The air smells of mysterious spices, and you can see drying herbs hanging from the rafters above you. A dried petal falls and lands on the heavy down blanket someone has put on you. A kindly face smiles down at you from a nearby stool, and tells you they found you out on the Glacier. How are you feeling? Roll both your dice and gain that many Warmth back as you sit and exchange stories with this gentle stranger.



# Diamonds – Treasures and Artifacts

## **Ace of Diamonds – The Explorer’s Coin**

As you walk, you see something shining in the snow beneath your feet. You stoop to examine it, and you find an ancient gold coin bearing the face of a complete stranger on its reverse side. Someone must have dropped this impossibly long ago – what errand took them here? Roll one of your dice – if the result is even, lose one Warmth. If it is odd, gain one Warmth.

## **2 of Diamonds – Frozen Bellflower**

In the undergrowth beside you, you could swear you hear the sound of a chime disturbing the icy air. When you look, there is nothing in the snowbank but a single sprig of flowers, encased in a coating of ice. Even when you pick them up, the ice refuses to melt – it is like a coating of crystal.

## **3 of Diamonds – Stained Glass**

As you walk through the snow, you find something solid with your boot. You pull it up, and a thick cushion of snow falls off to reveal a panel of glass about the size of your face. With your glove, you brush more of the snow off. It depicts a pair of people facing one another, surrounded by flowers and stars. Who were they? Maybe someone back in the city will know.

## **4 of Diamonds – Ice Dragon’s Hoard**

You find a cave carved entirely of ice, with a mouth big enough for an elephant to walk through. As you step under its roof you find the wind doesn’t subside here. No, it is colder in here than it is outside somehow. The light of your lantern glitters off a mound of frozen-solid treasures – coins, plates, jewels, ornate boxes, all of them completely encased in solid ice. You shouldn’t

be here. If you are seeking the Ice Dragon's Feather, you can spend 3 Warmth to search this place for a fallen feather. Roll both your dice: as long as the results don't match each other, you find the feather and can escape. Otherwise, lose 1 more Warmth and you find nothing.

### **5 of Diamonds – Survival Knife**

You walk past an evergreen tree, and a glint catches your eye. You turn to see a sturdy hunter's knife with a big handle and stiff, powerful cutting blade, embedded in the tree's bark. Someone needed this – you couldn't imagine wandering into the Glacier without yours! You give it a wiggle, and eventually pry it loose from the tree. Seems a shame to leave a good tool abandoned.

### **6 of Diamonds – Frozen Wishing Well**

There is a little well, just sitting like an abandoned coffee mug in the middle of the snow. It has a tiny roof to keep it sheltered, but as you get closer to peek, you see that the bottom of the well is just snow. Well, snow and the indentations of coins and other treasures that people have thrown in. Do you have a wish you'd like to make? If you leave an object behind, gain 1 Warmth.

### **7 of Diamonds – Iceberry Bushes**

Low bushes thrive alongside you as you walk through the snow. If you look down at them, you see little crystal-clear berries glittering on the bushes' delicate branches. Each one is only about the size of the head of a pin – if you pick one up, you see that it is not ice at all. These are tiny crystals, cut with brilliant facets as if by human hands.

### **8 of Diamonds – Enormous Coin**

You kick something solid in the snow, something

so heavy and hard that a shock of pain shivers through your body. You pause to brush the snow off of it, and see that it looks like it is made out of solid gold. It's a disc the size of a wheel, decorated with what looks like a map of the stars, complete with constellations both familiar and mysterious. You couldn't possibly take it with you, you don't think, so you leave it in a snowdrift.

### **9 of Diamonds – Diamond Bird**

A cry like a tinkling of bells rings through the air all around you, and there is a flurry of movement in the featureless sky. Suddenly, little crystalline talons latch into the shoulder of your coat as a bird, only the size of a common pigeon but resplendent with transparent glassy feathers, lands on you with a ringing noise. It regards you curiously, and as you move on, it stays with you. The next time a card would ask you to roll a die, you can choose what face to set it on instead.

### **10 of Diamonds – Ancient Statues**

At first, it looks like a normal cliff face to you, craggy and indistinct. But as you approach, you see that the cliff face is carved to show a scene, one of a happy family seated together by the hearth. Their stone faces seem to smile and laugh even as their home is buried in snow. Gain 1 Warmth.

### **J of Diamonds – Ancient Standard**

You come across a single stone, a plain monolith about your own height standing up out of the snow. In front of the stone, as if laid there as an offering, there is a spear standing up, and a tattered green banner flutters from it. Up close, you can see that it is adorned with an embroidered golden horse, and that there is an emblem of a horse on the spear head as well. You can tell that this is a grave, but whose?

### **Q of Diamonds – The Winter Queen’s Service**

Deep in the woods there is a clearing where the trees sparkle like diamonds and the cold sky above seems to shimmer with reflected light from the pearly, sparkling snow. In the middle of this clearing, there is a table untouched by falling snow, and if you look down, you can see small, delicate footprints leading away from the table, perfectly preserved. Sitting on the table, still steaming with the rich scent of rose tea, is a delicate tea service for two. It is white, with icy blue flowers. Do you stop to taste the tea? Roll one of your dice – if it shows less than a 4, you regain 2 Warmth.

### **K of Diamonds – Peculiar Crystal**

At first you don't even really notice it – it is the same blue-white color as the ice around here, so it could just be a piece of the surroundings. But, as you walk closer you can see that it has a shine all its own, and that it is not a piece of ice but a round, spherical crystal, pale blue in color and about the size of your first. It has a peculiar light to it, too, as if it is imbued with some life force all its own. Gain 1 Warmth.



# Clubs = Wonderful Vistas

## **Ace of Clubs – Village Gate**

This is the last familiar place before you reach the Glacier. A big gate made of ancient wood stands proud despite the dusting on snow on top. Behind you, there is a small village, and you can see the rooftops over the hill. In front of you, is the Glacier, a great icy wilderness. Are you ready to set out on your journey? Check your gear – this is your last chance. If you run out of Warmth here, you do not go to the Hermit's Home – instead, you roll one die, regain that much Warmth, and continue your journey here.

## **2 of Clubs – View of the Valley**

As you crest a hill, you find yourself on a wind-blasted plateau, one that affords a view of the Glacier before you. The wind here whisks your foggy breath away in seconds, so you shouldn't stay too long – but you might be able to get your bearings if you do. If you like, you may spend one Warmth to flip over an adjacent card and look at it. You don't need to resolve its rules unless you choose to move there.

## **3 of Clubs – Ancient Tree**

You come across a tree whose trunk is so enormous your arms couldn't possibly encircle it. As you approach, a squirrel runs up into the branches, chattering at your approach to warn anyone else who lives there. The tree has flat, broad leaves which should have fallen off ages ago – the tree is golden as if trapped in perpetual autumn. The thought takes some of the chill away; either that, or the tree just breaks the wind. Either way, regain 1 Warmth.



#### **4 of Clubs – Mysterious Hut**

You find a little house surrounded by evergreen trees. There is a pile of firewood beside it, and the chimney is smoking. You approach it to find that the door is open, that there are two bowls of steaming soup on a little table beside a roaring fire. There is no one to be found, and there are no footprints. There is a note on the table with your name on it, saying to help yourself. Roll one of your dice: you regain that much Warmth.

#### **5 of Clubs – Battle for Territory**

A resounding crack fills the cold air, followed by a deep bellowing noise. When you look out from behind a thick tree trunk, you see a pair of elk, enormous, shaggy creatures with steaming breath and spreading antlers. They circle one another, too focused on each other to notice you, and suddenly rear up and run their heads into one another. Best to leave while they're distracted – they seem angry.

#### **6 of Clubs – Mountain Hot Spring**

Nestled in a rocky outcropping, you see what looks at first like a mysterious mist. As you get closer, you see that it isn't mist at all – it's steam! There's a hot spring here among the rocks, complete with little creatures warming themselves in the steamy water. This is a little oasis of happiness in the Glacier, and as you settle in nearby you feel the exhaustion leaving your body. Roll both your dice and gain that much Warmth.

#### **7 of Clubs – Precarious Ice**

You look up to see an enormous icicle, easily larger than your entire body, dangling from an overhead rock formation. As the wind blows, it seems to wiggle and move, as if it could fall at any moment, but for now it is peacefully swaying and catching the light in a glittering spire.

### **8 of Clubs – Windswept Grove**

Standing proudly out of the featureless snow, you find a stand of ancient, delicate trees. They all bend in the same direction, and all their boughs trail in the same way, the way the wind was blowing when they froze. Sheets of ice trail dynamically from their posed limbs, catching the light like a pale silver fire as, for just a second, the clouds part and the sun can be seen.  
Gain 1 Warmth.

### **9 of Clubs – Magnificent Forest**

You descend down from a ridge to see that the Glacier has given way to a thick evergreen forest. Even from here, you can smell their needles and see the soft way they sway in the wind under fluffy blankets of fallen snow. Each of these trees is impossibly tall, and there is more than enough space between them for you to walk on fallen needles, as the snow cannot reach you here.  
Gain 2 Warmth.

### **10 of Clubs – Shadow of the Mountain**

Beside you on your walk is an enormous boulder the size of a house. It holds back a pile of smaller stones like a sentinel, unmoving no matter how much weight crushes against its side, and you can't help wondering how long it has been there, and how much pressure is on it. Perhaps some day it will give way, but for now, you feel completely secure next to it.

### **J of Clubs – The Mountain Knight**

You see a great hill, or perhaps a low mountain, through the blowing snow. As you grow closer its form grows clearer – you can see a folded leg, a resting arm, and even, faintly, a hand large enough that it could pick you up and cradle you. There is a head turned toward the horizon, too. Roll one of your dice and lose that much Warmth as you climb the lonely mountain – if you



still have Warmth remaining, then you make it to the giant's shoulder to see where they are watching.

### **Q of Clubs – Rabbit Boulder**

From a distance, as you crest a hill, you look down and see a boulder in the snow, lying perfectly still as the blizzard blows around it. From this far away, it looks like a rabbit at rest, with fissures that look like the rabbit's ears are flat against its back and its legs are bunched up underneath it. It's kind of cute – you could almost imagine its little nose twitching, as if there really were rabbits this size on the Glacier. You wouldn't be surprised.

### **K of Clubs – Abandoned Tower**

In a pile of rubble that was once a wall of cut granite, there is a tower still standing in the middle of the snow field. Its door towers over your head – how big a person used to use this tower? Did someone live here? It has been ruined for a long time, and some of the stones are frozen deep in the ice, as if the area once flooded. Nonetheless, there are enough stones still remaining that you can settle in out of the wind and warm up a little. You can even light a fire here. Roll one of your dice and gain half that much Warmth (rounded up).

# Spades – Dangers of the Glacier

## **Ace of Spades – Freezing Cavern**

There is a deep fissure in a wall of solid, deep-blue ice, one that leads into frigid darkness. This isn't a safe place for you – everything in your body shudders at the thought of going inside. But who knows what you might find there? If you like, you may pay 2 Warmth. If you do, choose a card that is not adjacent to the Ace of Spades and move your marker to that card.

## **2 of Spades – Sudden Cliff**

As you walk, you see nothing ahead of you, just the plain whiteness of the wintry sky. As you approach, the horizon grows closer, and closer, until you stand at the precipice of a cliff about ten feet high. The wind lashes at you and moans in your ear, but the bottom isn't too far away. You may choose to move to an adjacent card without spending Warmth.

## **3 of Spades – Wailing Crevasse**

A sound shakes the air and ice all around you, summoning tears to your eyes that you quickly wipe away. It is the sound of someone weeping inconsolably, a deep mournful cry. The closer you get to its source, a fissure in a wall of ice, the less human it sounds. Lose 1 Warmth.

## **4 of Spades – Frozen Wanderers**

You reach a wall of ice, and at first you walk closer to it to try and get out of the wind. In your temporary relief, you look up gratefully at the ice, and a shiver runs through you. Trapped in the solid ice like fallen leaves are the twisted forms of people, people bundled up like yourself in winter gear to trespass on the Glacier. You should hurry.

### **5 of Spades – Lost in the Drifts**

You break away from the ice and trees, and find yourself in an open plain of snowdrifts, and the milky sky won't let you see anything but white in any direction. The wind picks up, stinging your cheeks and brow, and soon you can see absolutely nothing in any direction. When the wind dies down – where were you, exactly? Pick up every card except the 5 of Spades, King of Hearts and Ace of Clubs, shuffle them, and replace them all face-down.

### **6 of Spades – Frozen River**

You come across a plain of ice like any other, but as you prepare to cross over it, you look down and see movement beneath, a big thick fish with dark scales darting around just under the frozen surface. This ice isn't as thick as it appears. If you like, you can continue exploring, but this might prove dangerous. You may roll your dice. If the result is odd, lose that many Warmth. If the result is even, reveal an adjacent card and travel there without spending any Warmth.

### **7 of Spades – Confusion**

Where were you? What were you doing? The wind wails around you and the snow spins in mysterious, hypnotic eddies. The ground is white, the sky is white, the wind is white, and you can't help wondering what someone as small and warm as you is doing in a place as great and cold as the Glacier. Pick up all the adjacent cards, except the Ace of Clubs or King of Hearts if they are nearby, shuffle them, and place them back face-down.

### **8 of Spades – Trapped Among the Rocks**

One minute, you are walking along a stony outcropping, and the next minute, your boot catches a

patch of ice and you slip and fall. When the snow settles around (and on) you, you find yourself in a narrow crevasse, surrounded by fallen stones and ice. Roll both your dice – if you roll a 6, carry on. Otherwise, spend 1 Warmth and roll again.

### **9 of Spades – Yawning Chasm**

Right in front of you, there is a chasm in the stone easily large enough for you to walk into. As you approach, you see that it is curiously warm inside, and the icicles that rim its entrance dangerously sharp. A peculiar smell that you cannot place but do not like wafts out of the depths of the chasm. The more you look at it, the more certain you are that it means to devour you. You leave in a hurry.

### **10 of Spades – Treacherous Specter**

The world around you is completely white, from the dazzling fresh snow to the cloudy sky to the thick coating of ice on everything you can see. In the distance, though, there is a shadow. Something stark black, wandering the Glacier in a formless robe that trails behind it like the smoke of a house fire. The wind stops for a moment, the snow falls lightly, but you still feel a chill you can't shake. Lose 2 Warmth.

### **J of Spades – Wandering Bear**

Unlike you, it moves through the snow silently and effortlessly, despite its enormous shaggy bulk. A huge bear snuffles around the forest ahead of you, digging in the snow and aimlessly scratching at the trees. There's no way you could survive if it decided to hurt you, so you shrink into a snowbank and hope it doesn't notice you. You wait until the bear has moved on, perfectly still in the snow. Lose 2 Warmth.

### **Q of Spades – Icy Spirit**

You duck into a narrow cavern to get out of the wind for a moment. You wipe your face and clear your eyes and shake the snow out of your scarf and your gloves. That's when you see her – she has a woman's shape, but everything about her, from her hair to her skin to her lips, is blue. She recoils from you slightly, from the warmth you brought into her icy sanctum. If you have more than 6 Warmth, she will attack you, causing you to lose 2. If the 6 of Clubs is revealed, she will cause you to lose 3 Warmth instead.

### **K of Spades – The Ice Dragon**

A roar shakes the snow loose from the nearby trees, and there is a gust of wind as the Ice Dragon descends into the forest in front of you. It is easily six times your size, with translucent, glittering wings and majestic silver-blue feathers. More important at this moment is a long, elegant face with snapping jaws full of icicle-sharp teeth. You brace for impact, grab your weapon, and remind yourself – you don't need to slay the dragon. You just need one of these feathers. Roll your dice – if you roll over 10, you succeed. You can spend 1 Warmth to roll again as many times as you like until you win or run out of Warmth.

# Thank you

Thank you for reading this game! I hope you enjoyed it, and would love it if you would take the time to let me know what you thought, either by leaving a review on <https://peachgardengames.itch.io/> or by dropping me a line on Twitter @PeachGardenRPGs or @CatlingGun

This game was written on unceded Treaty 6 land.

Inspiration for this game came from a variety of sources including:

- ▣ Edmonton winters
- ▣ The Great Glacier sequence in Final Fantasy 7, my favorite part of one of my favorite games.
- ▣ Mapping the Catacombs, from Sorceress & Witch
- ▣ The Wretched & Alone games, based on The Wretched, from Loot the Room
- ▣ The 2020 Winter Jam, which I barely completed this game in time for.

